SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
Information Bulletin #971

Confidence Testing of Fire Protection Systems

General Requirements

The Seattle Fire Code requires building owners to maintain their building's fire protection systems in good working condition at all times, and to ensure that these systems are tested on a regular basis. The periodic testing of fire protection systems is called *confidence testing*.

Building owners are expected to schedule annual and 5-year confidence tests without notification from the Seattle Fire Department. No more than 12 months may expire between annual tests.

Most confidence tests must be conducted by a *certified service technician*. A certified service technician possesses a certificate issued by the Seattle Fire Department. Certification is obtained by passing a written test administered by the Department. The certification, good for three years, is only applicable to that particular fire protection system. Many companies with certified employees are listed in your telephone company's yellow pages under headings such as "Fire Alarm Systems" and "Fire Protection".

After the system is tested, a service label must be attached to the system, and a confidence testing form must be sent to the Seattle Fire Department Confidence Testing Unit. The Confidence Testing Unit, part of the Fire Marshal's Office, is located at 220 3rd Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98104. The company you choose to perform your confidence test will have the correct forms, and will generally take care of sending the paperwork to the Fire Department. However, it is important to check with your confidence testing company on this point.

Testing Fire Alarm Systems

Fire alarm systems in high-rise buildings have 1/4 of the system tested each quarter so that the entire system is confidence tested annually.

Fire alarm systems in low-rise buildings are required to be *functionally tested* once a month. This means that a pull alarm is activated to ensure it is functioning. The person who conducts this monthly test does not have to be certified; however, they do need to be competent in the necessary procedures for testing and restoring the fire alarm system.

If you elect to have your fire alarm system professionally tested quarterly, you are not required to perform a monthly test.

If your fire alarm system consists *only* of interconnected smoke detectors, you are not required to perform a monthly test.

Fire & Life Safety Systems Confidence Testing Schedule on Back

Fire and Life Safety Systems Confidence Testing Schedule

SYSTEM TYPE	TEST FREQUENCY
Fire Alarm	Annually for low-rise buildings Quarterly for high-rise buildings
Stairway Door Locks	Annually
Fire Pumps	Annually
Standpipe and/or Hose Cabinets	Five years
Automatic Sprinklers	Annually
Shaft Pressurization	Annually
Emergency Generator	Annually
Tempered Windows/Smoke Removal	Annually
Sequence Tests (high rise)	Annually
Foam Systems	Annually & five years
Fire Escapes	Five years
Halon, CO2, Inergen	Annually
Rangehood	Annually

The following format must be used for all service tags.

DO NOT REMOVE	YEAR	MONTH	NEXT DUE DATE
By order of the Fire Chief	Firm _____ Address _____ Phone Number _____ Serviced By _____ Certificate Number _____		
Description of Work _____			